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First Army's Florida unit trains for DoD hurricane relief role

Article and photos by Karen Bradshaw, First Army Public Affairs Office



The DCE battle captain adds information to the DCE's mission tracking chart. Several fail-safe methods prioritize missions and ensure that nothing falls through the cracks.

Recently 39 Soldiers and civilians from the 2d Brigade, 87th Division (Training Support), deployed to Florida's Division of Emergency Management headquarters in Tallahassee. The deployment was for the purpose of using a 4-day hurricane exercise scenario to validate the unit's role as a Defense Coordinating Element (DCE) for their Military Support to Civil Authorities (MSCA) mission.

Their commander, Col. Christian de Graff, was the Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO) for the training scenario. At the same time, the State of Florida's Division of Emergency Management, along with other participating county and state agencies, conducted their annual statewide hurricane exercise. This training scenario was based on a fictitious storm named Zane and modeled after an historic 1935 hurricane.

Col. de Graff, who on a daily basis is commander of the 2d Brigade, 87th Division (Training Support), a First U.S. Army unit at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., has nearly 800 Soldiers under his command. He normally spends his days training and mobilizing National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers in Florida, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. When needed to support federally declared disasters however, de Graff and his troops stand ready to deploy at a moment's notice and join the federal team to provide life-saving support from the Department of Defense (DoD).

The DCO and his DCE staff provide DoD support to the training exercise. Col. de Graff's role is to support the lead federal agency, usually Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), with any needed DoD assets. As DCO, he has operational authority over all DoD personnel within the disaster area and tasking authority for any military support necessary to assist the operation.

The DCE staff that supports the DCO is comprised of 2d Brigade Soldiers trained in the Federal Response Plan. They establish an operations center which tracks missions and requests for assistance from FEMA and other federal agencies asking for DoD support.

During any disaster or severe emergency, First U.S. Army's network of trained experts, called Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officers

See Florida unit, p.8

Commander's Corner

Soldiers, Civilians and Family Members –

Warrior Ethos
Always Place the Mission First
Never Accept Defeat
Never Quit
Never Leave a Fallen Comrade

At recent Memorial Day services, Americans everywhere paused to honor the memory of those in uniform who died in service to our country.

From all walks of life, these Americans were ordinary people who were asked to make extraordinary sacrifices in extraordinary times for their country. We owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude to those brave souls who made the ultimate sacrifice for us all. It remains our sacred duty to never forget them.

As we move to celebrate the Army's 229th Birthday on June 14, we can be proud that we are part of a great institution of values and character. Soldiers ARE the Army and share a unique heritage of service and sacrifice for a cause greater than themselves. In First U.S. Army, we see evidence of this as we mobilize National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers for the Global War on Terrorism missions.

As many of you depart over the summer, I humbly thank you for your incredibly hard work through these challenging times. Please remember to be safe as you transition to new places.

In meeting upcoming missions, I have great confidence that our superb First U.S. Army team of Active, National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers and civilians can do the job professionally and with the sense of urgency that an Army at war requires.

Please convey my best wishes to your families. Keep them safe over the summer. Thank you for your great work on behalf of First U.S. Army and our Nation.

Lt. Gen. Joseph R. Inge
Commander, First U.S. Army
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SECDEF-ALMILACT 03-04-- Message To Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines

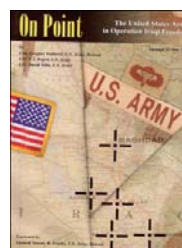
The reports of detainee abuse by American Soldiers in Iraq are deeply troubling. Those who have not upheld the high standards of our Armed Forces must be held accountable. With honor, the men and women of our Armed Forces must maintain our focus to secure a stable and free Iraq and to win the global war on terrorism.

We ask that each of you remember who we are and what we represent. We are Americans, and our actions must uphold the values of our country and the highest standards of professionalism and ethics. Our military code of conduct requires it, our nation demands it, and the world expects it. Our culture of accountability and responsibility will accept nothing less.

As you serve around the world, stand tall. Be proud of what you are doing to make the world a better place. Your nation is grateful for your unwavering professionalism, selfless service, courage, and sacrifice.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and I are enormously proud to serve with you.

Donald H. Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense



The Army has released its first comprehensive unclassified study on the Army actions during the major hostilities phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The online version is available at <http://onpoint.leavenworth.army.mil>.

“Soldiers see what is in front of them, not the big picture (in battle),” said retired Col. Gregory Fontenot, “On Point” coauthor. “We wanted to communicate clearly and effectively what happened. This is the story of America’s Army.”

Command Sergeant Major's Message



Command Sgt. Maj.
Jeffrey J. Mellinger

Leaders,

Tips of the Trade came from soldiers serving in Viet Nam, and were written down a number of years later. Here is the last of the series, and you will note that you must use current terms and equipment, but some of the lessons are still useful.

Platoon & Squad Operations

(The discussion is usually short, followed by a series

of lesson bullets that are offered for consideration.)

TOPIC: Reconnaissance.

DISCUSSION: These techniques, unless otherwise noted, apply to both the scout platoon and regular combat patrols.

LESSON(S):

- Reconnaissance teams should be small, three -four men maximum.
- Travel light. Reconnaissance patrols should carry a "butt" pack only. Scout platoon teams will require a rucksack. However, resist the temptation to pack it with 100 pounds of lightweight gear.
- Do not wear helmets; they degrade your hearing and reduce your peripheral vision.
- Travel in a series of short, deliberate movements. Your maximum cross-country speed should be 200 - 300 meters per hour.
- Take listening halts for at least 15 minutes every hour.
- Patrolling more than 500 meters in front of the unit should be handled by the scouts.
- Pattern reconnaissance techniques are difficult to execute in the jungle. Use them sparingly because they require a lot of time.
- Each four-man team should have two radios. One should be pre-set to the fire control net's

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frequency. Always have a pre-cut jungle antenna.

- Always have a contingency plan in the event of the loss of communications.
- Do not use insect repellent, scented soap, Avon Skin So Soft, and other nonorganic smelling substances when on reconnaissance. The enemy can smell you before you reach the objective.
- To repel insects, take garlic pills or eat garlic for a week prior to going on a reconnaissance in the jungle.
- To provide further security, try to eat indigenous rations for one week prior to going on reconnaissance. This will keep from alerting the enemy by your smell.
- Pre-rig your claymores with an M-60 fuse igniter and time fuse to provide a means of breaking contact.
- Carry an HC white smoke grenade and a CS grenade. When thrown together, the HC disguises the CS until the enemy is in the cloud. It also tends to suspend the CS in the air for a longer period. This action will slow up enemy pursuit. Also, he will tend to avoid white smoke clouds from then on.
- Carry pursuit denial munitions (PDMs) whenever you can. Put them in a claymore bag sewn to the top of your rucksack.
- You can never carry enough grenades. You can use them without giving your position away.
- Carry 1:25,000 maps whenever you can. Update them as you go.
- Avoid trails and natural lines of drift whenever possible. If you must move on a trail, travel slowly.
- Do not carry maps marked with graphics and complete SOIs. Employ minimal graphics and use SOI extracts.

See Platoon & squad, p.4

Realistic training environment part of 53d Inf. Brigade's CPX

It 'adds a little emphasis' to this year's annual training, says commander

By Jon Myatt, Florida Department of Military Affairs

Outwardly, Camp Blanding looks like most U. S. Army installations in the United States. But after the 10-minute drive from the main cantonment area downrange to the 53d Infantry Brigade's tactical operations center, you would have trouble identifying the location of this "battlefield."

It is a serene setting and, except for the sound of power generators humming in the background, would be hard to notice if passing by. Tucked into a small grove of trees off a dirt road, away from the hustle and bustle of the main post, is the brigade's tactical operations center, or "TOC." Camouflaged and secured behind a network of trenches and bull-dozed embankments, encircled by concertina wire and guarded by Soldiers, the "TOC" is the hub of activity around which the whole military operation functions. It is almost identical to similar headquarters in Afghanistan and Iraq, or for that matter, anywhere the US Army operates in the world.

It is obvious to the observer that something is happening here. Soldiers traveling to and away from the complex have a sense of purpose. There is seriousness and a sense of urgency in their actions. To the uninitiated, it would be difficult to tell that this was only a training exercise.

But today, it is an exercise.

Realism, combined with a healthy dose of combat experience and the impending deployment of the brigade combat team to Afghanistan next year, is adding "a little more emphasis" and urgency to this year's annual training, according to Col. John Perryman, the brigade's commander.

Perryman, a second generation Florida Guardsman, exudes confidence in his Soldiers and the upcoming mission to southwest Asia. While he attributes some of his feelings to the transformation of the Army Guard he has seen in his 27 years career as a Soldier and leader, the primary reason he says his Soldiers are ready is caused by current events.

"The training guidance we received from the Adjutant General and other (senior commands) has validated the things we've been doing in the past year and it adds realism to the exercise, of course," he says. But what

See Realistic training, p.7

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Platoon & squad (Cont.)

- Carry at least four quarts of water and two bottles of iodine tablets. Check the iodine tablets before you move out.
- Carry your basic load of ammunition. Expend it liberally to break contact. Use a mix of tracers and ball to alert you when your magazine is almost empty.
- Use a simple near and far identification system. Always remember that you are the "Indians," not the "cavalry."

TOPIC: Hasty Attack/React to Contact.

DISCUSSION: Due to the limited visibility of the jungle, the hasty attack is the most likely scenario.

LESSON(S):

- React quickly with every weapon that you can bring to bear as soon as you contact the enemy. Gain immediate fire superiority and keep it.
- Do not wait for a clear visual target to open fire. Fire at smoke, muzzle flashes, or by sound. Otherwise, the enemy will gain fire superiority. Use grenades immediately, both smoke and fragmentation.
- Develop a battle drill for the hasty attack. It should be simple, well rehearsed, and tailored to the jungle. If you can only rehearse one battle drill, this is it. The key element for a hasty attack in the jungle is the fire team.
- The key leader for a hasty attack in the jungle is the squad leader. Use your initiative. The platoon leader and platoon sergeant will be busy with reporting, calling for fire support, and controlling CASEVAC.
- Assault with shallow fire team wedges. They are easiest to control in the jungle while providing firepower to the front. Drop rucksacks by fire team on line of deployment or when decisively engaged.

See Platoon & squad, p.6

Army suggestion program goes online

By Joe Burlas

Soldiers and Department of the Army civilians can now go online to offer Army suggestions -- and possibly win some cash.

The Army Suggestion Program, <https://armysuggestions.army.mil>, went online May 17. Logging on requires an Army Knowledge Online user name and password.



While there are several advantages to an Army central online program, the biggest plus is anyone with access to the Web can make a suggestion in a timely manner -- no matter where

they are, said Brenda Scott, a Suggestion Program official with the Office of the Chief of Staff Strategic Management and Innovations Division.

In the past, deployed Soldiers who came up with good ideas when away from home station would often wait to submit that idea through channels until they returned home, Scott said. The reasons for the wait, she said, were several: getting a copy of Army Regulation 5-17 that outlines submission requirements, keeping the hardcopy submission form clean in the field while filling it out and lack of research resources.

"We have more than 100,000 Soldiers deployed overseas right now and thousands more DA civilians with them," Scott said. "Any one of them with a suggestion can now go online and submit their ideas without fear of getting the paperwork dirty, and there are links on the page that give lots of research material."

The site also has a link to AR 5-17.

There is even a save function that allows suggestors to fill out the submission packet over a period of time rather than during just one session.

The program seeks suggestions that improve work methods, materials, processes, equipment, logistics,

utilities or tools that will benefit the Army. Implemented suggestions that save the Army money are often eligible for a cash award. The more money saved, the larger the potential award.

The suggestion must present a problem or situation, propose a solution and state the benefit to the government.

The new website also allows supervisors to nominate a suggestor for recognition as the top suggestor of the year in Soldier and DA civilian categories during the annual Secretary of the Army Awards ceremony.



First U.S. Army's Chief of Staff, Col. John Jordan thanked volunteers at a special end-of-month ceremony in the headquarters on April 30. In recognizing the special gifts of time and talent that volunteers bestow on schools and communities, Jordan noted that many organizations could never afford to pay for some of the special services volunteers provide to the community. *(Photo: Susan Norvick)*



Maj. Gen. Watson welcomes Command Sgt. Maj. Belcher as the 87th Division Command Sergeant Major. *(Photo courtesy of the 87th PAO Office)*



Screening of obligated Individual Ready Reserve Soldiers for possible assignment to Army Reserve Units

The Army's Human Resources Command - St. Louis (HRC-STL), is identifying Individual Ready Reserve Soldiers with a statutory Military Service Obligation (MSO) remaining for possible assignment to an Army Reserve unit. These Soldiers may be assigned to position vacancy requirements within designated Reserve units based upon the needs of the Army.

At this time, there have been no involuntary assignments of IRR Soldiers to any Army Reserve units. The HRC-STL is identifying IRR Soldiers for possible assignment. HRC-STL is responsible for the management of all Army IRR soldiers and has standard business processes in place.

The Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) consists of over 118,000 trained Soldiers who may be called upon to fill vacancies in Army Reserve units and may replace Soldiers in Active and Reserve Units. Part of the Army's Ready Reserve, the IRR involves individuals who have had training, served previously in the Active Component or the Selected Reserve (such as a member of an Army Reserve unit), and may have some period of military service obligation remaining.

Unlike new recruits, these are seasoned, experienced Soldiers who can contribute significantly to Army readiness. All Soldiers have a statutory eight-year military service obligation (MSO), which is established at the time of entry into military service (Active or Reserve).

The IRR, as it exists, is mandated by Congress under Title 10 of the U.S. Code. In accordance with implementing instructions contained in Army Regulation 135-91, members of the IRR can be required to join an Army Reserve unit if they are statutorily obligated and have a skill needed by the Army. If a member of the IRR desires to volunteer to join a Reserve unit, they may call the Army's Human Resources Command - St Louis at 1(800) 318-5298, or send an email to the appropriate office. More information on volunteering for mobilization is available within the Mobilization area of our site. Additional questions and answers regarding this will be placed at a later date on the HRC-STL Web site: www.hrc.army.mil.

Platoon & squad (Cont.)

TOPIC: Deliberate Attack.

DISCUSSION: Deliberate attacks have the same considerations as the raid, minus the withdrawal. Instead, you substitute consolidation and reorganization. Keep in mind that most successful counterattacks take place within 15-20 minutes of the enemy leaving the objective.

LESSON(S):

- Deliberate attacks are difficult to synchronize.
- Pay special attention to land navigation.
- Establish your limit of advance (LOA) after careful consideration of the terrain. If at all possible, establish it along a easily discernible terrain feature.
- Task-organize to provide 360-degree security on the objective as you sweep to the LOA.
- Reconnoiter the near side of the objective first. Do a far side reconnaissance of the objective after you have cleared between the LOA and the objective. This will dramatically reduce your chances of compromise during the leader's reconnaissance.
- Consider using an indirect fire preparation of the objective.
- When you arrive at the LOA, set out your LPs/OPs immediately. Make sure they have claymores to cover their withdrawal if necessary.
- Register your indirect fire assets as soon as you arrive at the LOA.
- Use the engineers to emplace a hasty protective minefield as soon as you have cleared the objective.
- If you use a reserve, consider tasking the reserve for your special teams.
- Accomplish all of the above in under 15 minutes. Be aware of stay-behind snipers as you approach the objective.

Army scientists, engineers develop liquid body armor

By Tonya Johnson
Army News Service

Liquid armor for Kevlar vests is one of the newest technologies being developed at the U.S. Army Research Laboratory to save Soldiers' lives.

This type of body armor is light and flexible, which allows soldiers to be more mobile and won't hinder an individual from running or aiming his or her weapon.

The key component of liquid armor is a shear thickening fluid. STF is composed of hard particles suspended in a liquid. The liquid, polyethylene glycol, is non-toxic, and can withstand a wide range of temperatures. Hard, nano-particles of silica are the other components of STF. This combination of flowable and hard components results in a material with unusual properties.

"During normal handling, the STF is very deformable and flows like a liquid. However, once a bullet or frag hits the vest, it transitions to a rigid material, which prevents the projectile from penetrating the Soldier's body," said Dr. Eric Wetzel, a mechanical engineer from the Weapons and Materials Research Directorate who heads the project team.

To make liquid armor, STF is soaked into all layers of the Kevlar vest. The Kevlar fabric holds the STF in place, and also helps to stop the bullet. The saturated fabric can be soaked, draped, and sewn just like any other fabric.

Wetzel and his team have been working on this technology with Dr. Norman J. Wagner and his students from the University of Delaware for three years.

"The goal of the technology is to create a new material that is low cost and lightweight which offers equivalent or superior ballistic properties as compared to current Kevlar fabric, but has more flexibility and less thickness," said Wetzel. "This technology has a lot of potential."

Liquid armor is still undergoing laboratory tests, but Wetzel is enthusiastic about other applications that the technology might be applied to.

"The sky's the limit," said Wetzel. "We would first like to put this material in a soldier's sleeves and pants, areas that aren't protected by ballistic vests but need to remain flexible. We could also use this material for bomb blankets, to cover suspicious packages or unexploded ordnance. Liquid armor could even be applied to jump boots, so that they would stiffen during impact to support Soldiers' ankles."

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Realistic training (Cont.)

"really adds realism and a little more emphasis to the Soldier is because, by the calendar, what we're doing out here with blanks and lasers, in 15 months, we'll be going down range and doing with real bullets."

The danger of improvised explosive devices, vulnerability during convoys, and other threats to his Soldiers in an operation of this magnitude in not lost on them, he says.

"Protecting the force is always at the top of the list of priorities, we can't accomplish any mission without protecting the personnel and resources to do it with, so our ability to sustain our combat operations is critical," Perryman said. "It's priority one, and everything we do emanates from there."

And the brigade is fortunate in that regard, he says, having so many combat veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. Roughly 1,500 of them, members of the 1st, 2d, and 3d Battalions of the 124th Infantry, are members of his brigade, though he has brought only about 100 of them to the field for this training exercise. They are an example of the professionalism of the force, he explained, since they are all volunteers who wanted to bring their personal experience to the exercise and to help those leaders and Soldiers for whom next year's operation in Afghanistan will be their first overseas deployment.

This week the brigade had a two-fold purpose, he said. "For the staffs, we've focused the CPX (command post exercise) on the synchronization of all the battlefield information systems -- the flow of information and analysis of information. For the units in the field, their focus has been on force protection measures -- convoy operations, local security, and force protection -- those tasks that they'll have to be proficient in when they deploy to Afghanistan next year."

With extensive news media coverage of combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq over the past two years, many of the brigade's Soldiers expected to be called up to participate, he said.

"For some time we've sort of anticipated that we might get a mission to Afghanistan," Perryman said. "All of our training focus and much of the work our staff is doing is geared toward those tasks and our priorities that are based on the lessons learned from

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Army announces new disabled Soldier initiative

The Department of the Army announced a new initiative that gives Soldiers wounded during the Global War on Terrorism an additional means of getting help once they are medically retired from the Army. The program is called the Disabled Soldier Support System, or DS3.

Through DS3, the Army provides its most severely disabled Soldiers and their families with a system of advocacy and follow-up to provide personal support and liaison to resources, to assist them in their transition from military service. DS3 is a holistic approach program that provides them with assistance. DS3 is an extension of the philosophy that the Army takes care of it's own – once a Soldier, always a Soldier. DS3 links the Army and the organizations that stand ready to assist these Soldiers and families, such as the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the many Veteran's Service Organizations, to the Soldier.

One key element of DS3 is the ability to provide a network of resources to severely disabled Soldiers, no matter where they relocate and regardless of their component, be it active, reserve or National Guard. The goal is to ensure Soldiers, families, and communities receive responsive support services that meet their needs.

The Army realizes many of these Soldiers were not planning to make the move back to civilian life so abruptly. DS3, in partnership with the VA and the VSO's, provides a much-needed cushion for that transition.



Florida unit (Con't)

EPLOs), help the DCO to coordinate the military's efforts and ensure a well-synchronized, rapid response. The EPLOs are senior officers from the U. S. Army, Navy and Air Force Reserve who are assigned to First U.S. Army. In the event of a disaster, they are called upon to work with the DCO or in the First U.S. Army Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Their vital knowledge and links to military capabilities in their assigned areas are critically important to the DCO in identifying potential military support.

"I can't emphasize enough the value of our DoD team and our liaison officers," said de Graf. "They bring unique perspectives to the DCE and enable us to make quicker decisions on what assets are nearby or available. Liaison officers are critical to operations in the DCE."



Maj Jose Vazquez, action officer in the DCE, explains DCE operations in Spanish to visiting government officials from Nicaragua. The group includes the head of the Nicaraguan National Police, an Army colonel who is head of the Nicaraguan Civil Defense force which is part of the Army, and the Director of Emergencies for the president of the country.

Behind the scenes of the training exercise, more liaison officers acted as observer/controller/trainers. They provide exercise problems to the DCE to test and stress the system. Jerome Loving, DCE exercise coordinator for First U.S. Army, used the expertise of emergency preparedness officers from FEMA Region V to provide input for exercise play. These seasoned officers are state and regional EPLOs from such central states as Illinois and Wisconsin.

At the conclusion of the exercise, 2d Brigade Soldiers moved on to Camp Blanding, Fla., for their next mission of conducting annual training for the Florida National Guard's 53d Infantry Brigade. Simultaneously, nearly 100 other 2d Brigade Soldiers were on their way to Fort Dix, N.J., to assist in the training the 42d Infantry Division (Mechanized) as it is being readied for an overseas mission.

Hamburgers and “values” served for lunch

Gayle Johnson, *First Army Public Affairs*
Pictures by Phil Manson

Soldiers from HQ, First U. S. Army served loyalty, duty, respect, selfless-service, honor, integrity, and personal courage along with hamburgers and chips to students at Quarters 5 on Fort McPherson.

Mrs. Linda Inge, wife of the Commanding General of First U.S. Army, Lt. Gen. Joseph R. Inge hosted a barbeque lunch and discussion of Soldier values for 40 fifth grade boys from Forest Park’s W. A. Fountain Elementary School on May 12.

“A discussion about Soldier values can be a heavy subject for fifth grade boys, but today’s youth need to know about values. First Army Soldiers did a great job keeping the discussion at the boy’s level and relating it to situations they could understand,” said Inge.



Maj. Douglas McBride, First Army's Deputy Inspector General, explains Soldier values to students gathered in the living room at Quarters 5.

Eleven Soldiers from First Army volunteered to participate in the community relations event. Maj. Douglas McBride, First Army's Deputy Inspector General, explained the importance of values to the students who will soon be entering middle school. McBride told the students that having values means “doing the right thing when no one is looking.”

The students were separated into seven groups and assigned Soldier mentors who led lunch-time discussions on individual Soldier values. Each table was assigned a value. After the value was explained by the mentor, the students were asked how they could use “their” value at home, school, and in the community.

A student from each of the seven tables shared what they had learned about their assigned value with the group. For loyalty, Quintavius Ellis explained “being loyal means to support your friends and not laugh at them when they need help.”

“The future is now for today's youth and what better way to pave a successful path for them to travel than an in depth

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Students listen to a living history presentation by Mr. Fred Adolphus, deputy/curator at The Army in Atlanta Museum.

discussion of Soldier values and how these values can enable these outstanding young men to successfully make the tough transition from elementary school to middle school,” said McBride.

In addition to the values discussion at lunch, the students visited The Army in Atlanta Museum located on Fort McPherson. The museum focuses on Forts McPherson and Gillem and their importance to the role the Army plays in the defense of our nation.

This is not the first time Mrs. Inge has opened her home to students from Fountain Elementary. In March, she hosted two teas for the fifth grade girls. Mrs. Shelly Huber, wife of First Army's Deputy Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Keith M. Huber, assisted Mrs. Inge at both events.



A group picture of First Army Soldiers and Fountain Elementary students. The students on the front row are holding Army value posters that represent the theme for the event.

Dr. Alvin Anderson, Assistant Principal at W. A. Fountain Elementary, thanked Mrs. Inge and the Soldiers for an excellent event “that the boys will not soon forget.”

Fountain Elementary is a Partner-In-Education school with First U. S. Army.



The National Military Family Association and Sears American Dream Campaign has created a program (Operation Purple) that allows all military children (with a preference given to children who have experienced deployment or whose parents are now deployed) to attend summer camp.

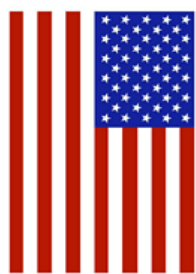
These camps are located in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Florida, Texas, Montana, Washington, Guam, North Carolina, Georgia, Oklahoma, Colorado, Utah, and Hawaii.

The camp is free of charge to all military children. Operation Purple seeks to give military kids some additional tools to help them cope with the stresses of deployment such as unique arts projects, team building, and time of reflection and much more.

Please go to www.nmfa.org for additional information to include an application and to find a camp near you. Also, you can call the National Military Family Association at (703) 931-6632 or (800) 260-0218.

For general questions please contact operationpurple@nmfa.org.

Flag Day in the United States is June 14th



In the British colonies of North America before the Revolution, each of the 13 colonies had its flag. On Jan. 2, 1776, the first flag of the United States was raised at Cambridge, Mass., by George Washington. Known as the Grand Union flag, it consisted of 13 stripes, alternate red and white, with a blue canton bearing the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew. Congress, on June 14, 1777, enacted a resolution "that the Flag of the United States be 13 stripes alternate red and white, that the Union be 13 stars white in a blue field representing a new constellation."

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Message from the Secretary and Chief Of Staff:

Never in recent memory have our Army Values, the Soldier's Creed, and our Warrior Ethos been more important for us to reflect upon than today. Our Army is serving our Nation with great courage and honor during very dangerous times. We enjoy great support and the confidence of the American People, whom we serve, and we are respected around the globe. In view of current events, we must re-double our efforts—hold our heads high—and drive on to accomplish our individual tasks and collective missions. Integrity is non-negotiable. Everyone has leadership responsibilities when it comes to the Legal, Moral, and Ethical. Discipline is doing what's right when no one is watching. We are proud of you and our Army. Drive on!

Peter J. Schoomaker
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

R. L. Brownlee
Acting Secretary of the Army

Realistic training (Cont.)

theater operations and the experience of our three battalions that just returned.

"I've got no doubt at all that the Soldiers of this brigade can accomplish the mission," he said. "They're trained, they're motivated – it's really been encouraging to me as I've gone around and talked to the troops -- they are overwhelmingly looking forward to getting engaged with it.

"While there's obviously some apprehension, as one would expect, I think the Soldiers are pretty charged up about it," he said.

From the looks of things in this operations center on Camp Blanding, Col. Perryman is right on the mark. It is a Saturday night and his brigade is training.

As the springtime sun slowly sinks into the horizon, 1,500 Soldiers are training for their mission in the Global War on Terror. For the rest of us...we can hug our children, we can plan for the future, we can sleep well tonight.

Updates and networking highlight First Army G1 Conference

By Karen Bradshaw, First Army Public Affairs Office

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Lt. Gen. Joseph R. Inge, First U.S. Army commander, had one thing on his mind when he welcomed the 60 Soldiers and civilians attending the First Army G1 Personnel Conference in Atlanta last week. He wanted the professionals to remember that they are in the personnel business...they are impacting Soldiers and families.

"What you do or don't do affects people. You must be proactive," Inge urged the participants. "Anticipate what needs to be done, don't wait. And don't let any Soldier leave this command without an appropriate award and a sincere thanks for the work they have done," he said.

First Army's Command Sergeant Major Jeffrey Mellinger said simply, "Take care of Soldiers. Difficult times are ahead of us. We are still in the Global War on Terrorism. Keep your focus on Soldiers and safety."

Inge alluded to current events in the news when he looked squarely at the group and said, "If the recent pictures on TV don't bother you, then you are in the wrong business. Remember, we are still an institution of values and character. We right ourselves, take corrective action and move on. We follow our Constitution and we follow our oath."

"The Global War on Terrorism," according to Dr. Vicki Dunn, the First Army G1, "is causing the Army to make changes at a fast pace. This is impacting the personnel system and affects our active Soldiers, National Guardsmen and U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers across the board. Because First Army is a multi-component organization in the business of mobilizing Soldiers, it means we have to know all the issues to stay on top of things," said Dunn.

Personnel officers and NCOs attending the conference from First Army's three training support divisions, the 78th Division (TS) in Edison, N.J., 85th Division (TS) in Arlington Heights, Ill., and 87th Division (TS) in Birmingham, Ala., and their brigades, represented some 10,000 Soldiers in the command stationed across 27-states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Task Force 218 (TF 218) assistant S1, Capt. Charles Goad, and assistant S1 NCO, Staff Sgt. William Kyzer, are members of the South Carolina National Guard 218th Brigade Headquarters that was activated to work for First Army after 9-11. Based at Fort Jackson, S.C., TF 218 serves as the command and control element over 4,219 National Guard Soldiers who are providing security at Army and Air Force bases stateside in the Global War on Terrorism.

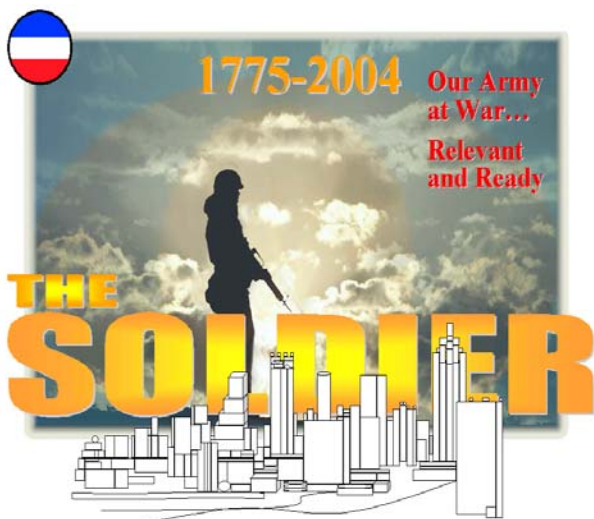
"We track each Soldier supplementing the different installations and we also provide personnel services to them," said Goad. "Last year, TF 218 kept track of more than 9500 Guardsmen on active duty for the security missions in the First Army area."

The two-day conference was packed with numerous detailed briefings from Department of the Army Human Resources Command, First U.S. Army and the U.S. Army Reserve Command and levels in between. A conference notebook tabbed "A" through "Y" gave a clue to the depth of topics covered to include branch updates, promotions, family programs and force structure to name only a few.

One of the newest officer personnel programs discussed was the upcoming DDS or Dynamic Distribution System. Completely different from previous assignment systems, "DDS will be operations-base and not cycle-based," said Capt. Lang Lucas who was briefing from Human Resources Command. Lucas, an AC/RC account manager, was spreading the word of DDS. In its final developmental stages, the Dynamic Distribution System is scheduled for implementation later this year according to Col. Allen East, architect of the system.



Sgt. First Class Tammy Amaro makes notes at the First Army G1 Personnel Conference in Atlanta. Amaro is the S1 NCO for 1st Brigade, 85th Division (Training Support) near Chicago. (photo by Karen Bradshaw)



First In Deed

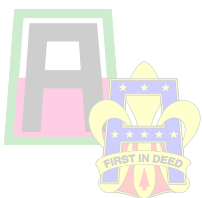
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229th United States Army Birthday

Since its birth on 14 June 1775—over a year before the Declaration of Independence, the United States Army has played a vital role in the growth and development of our nation. Soldiers have fought more than 10 wars, from the American Revolution through the Cold War, the Gulf War, to the current Global War on Terrorism. This 229th Birthday is a recognition of The Army's history, traditions, and service to the Nation. Our Army At War- Relevant and Ready.

**Atlanta Celebrates 229th Army Birthday
Army Birthday Week, June 5-19,
2004**

The Army in Atlanta invites you to celebrate a variety of Army birthday events. Go to www.forscom.army.mil for detailed information about the events to include pricing information.



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Send us your stories or story ideas.

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Lt. Gen. Joseph R. Inge—Commanding General

Lt. Col Richard Steele—Chief, Public Affairs
Richard.Steele@first.army.mil
Ms. Gayle Johnson—PA Specialist—Editor
Gayle.Johnson@first.army.mil

First U.S. Army Public Affairs Office
4705 N Wheeler Drive
Forest Park, GA 30297-5000

DSN 797-7327 CML (404) 469-7327
FAX DSN 797-3101
CML FAX (404) 469-3101